



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: PUBLIC K-12 SCHOOL PROCUREMENT
STUDY

Issued By:
The Connecticut Department of Agriculture
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Department Contact

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The RFP is also available on the Department's website at
www.CTGrown.gov/grants.

Responses to this RFP must be emailed to the department
contact.

RESPONSES MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN
Monday, April 18 by 4:00 PM

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DOAG) is seeking to conduct a study of farm to school activities across the state focused on the procurement of Connecticut Grown farm products by Connecticut Public K-12 schools through interviews, surveys, and other data collection.

This funding opportunity is for \$25,000.

To be considered for this funding opportunity, please submit a brief proposal of **no more than five (5) pages of narrative** including the information specified below.

1. A statement detailing your approach to accomplishing the metrics outlined below.
2. A brief statement explaining your interest in engaging with research focused on Farm to School activities and any relevant experience.
3. A work plan and timeline detailing:
 - a. Timetable / Schedule listing tasks and anticipated completion dates
 - b. Deliverables
 - c. Methodologies
 - d. Measurable Objectives
4. A detailed budget and budget justification. This is **NOT** included in the 5-page narrative limit (applicants may use and attach an excel spreadsheet)
5. Applicants may submit an additional **one (1) page** section (outside of the proposal's narrative section of 5 pages) further highlighting your expertise, skills, and qualifications.
6. **Submit your completed proposal by email no later than Monday, April 18, 2022 before 4:00p.m., by email to Ms. Cyrena Thibodeau: Cyrena.Thibodeau@ct.gov.**
7. **Proponents may email directly with questions. Any questions entertained and DOAG responses will be made publicly available on the Department's website.**
8. **Late proposals will not be considered for review, but at the discretion of the DOAG, may be held for up to six (6) months, if additional opportunities open/reopen.**

Purpose

The selected awardee will conduct a quantitative and qualitative study to determine baseline information on Farm to School activities (focused on CT Grown procurement) in Connecticut Public K-12 Schools, including but not limited, to the following metrics;

1. To gain a baseline understanding of how much Connecticut public and state school districts and select early childcare centers spend annually on CT Grown farm products;
 - i. List of contacts for each of these specific groups will be provided by DOAG to the identified vendor;
2. To gain an understanding of what kind of CT grown farm products are purchased through schools and early childhood providers;

3. To gain an understanding of the frequency of CT Grown farm product purchases from schools and early childhood providers annually;
4. To gain an understanding of the funding pools that schools and ECE centers use to purchase CT Grown (i.e. Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Pilot, micro purchasing, DOD, Commodity Dollars, etc.)
5. To determine how CT schools and early childhood providers source CT Grown farm products for purchase (i.e. established distributor, food hub, direct from a producer, others);
6. To determine existing barriers to purchasing CT Grown farm products from sources listed above;
7. To assess schools' capacity to process and incorporate whole CT Grown farm of products into school meals;
8. To gather data on how many schools are participating in farm to school activities (in the cafeteria, community, and classroom).
9. The positive impacts on students and producers, measured in quantitative and qualitative metrics, of incorporating CT Grown farm products into CT schools and early childcare provider's school meals.

Statement of Work

Proposals for qualifying projects should focus on obtaining robust data to identify baseline CT Grown purchasing interest, capacity, and barriers in schools and early childhood providers. Successful projects will align with the following expectations:

2. Work with the DOAG, CT Department of Education, and other key farm to school partners in the state to inform research questions and methods to approximately 200 total K-12 school contacts and additional early childhood providers.
3. Using tools and questions informed by the DOAG and partners, design and disseminate a survey to all K-12 school districts in the state through the School Nutrition Directors, or through another appropriate school contact as well as additional early childcare providers.
4. Conduct in-depth conversations with no less than 25 districts throughout the state representing the diversity of the state (urban-rural, demographics, size, alliance districts and non-alliance districts).
5. Create a comprehensive, accessible report of all data collected –provide all access to survey responses and focus group materials etc. in an online Dropbox or Sharepoint website.
6. Create a summary report with insights and analysis on presentation of findings. This data will serve as a foundation for legislative briefings, white papers and other produced materials for the program.

Deliverables

A summary of findings that shall be shared through a final report and a public presentation to relevant stakeholders such as other CT state agencies, the Farm to School Collaborative and the CT Food Policy Council among others.

All data shall be shared with DOAG for DOAG's use.

DOAG will provide a list of the relevant K-12 Public Schools and early childcare providers for the survey.

Evaluation Criteria:

DOAG will designate a Review Committee to evaluate proposals submitted. The contents of all submitted proposals will be shared with the Review Committee. They will use a simple 1-5 system for scoring, with 5 being the highest. They will evaluate the proposals for the following criteria:

- Concise, clear messaging: a direct, succinct, and easy to understand proposal and a scope that contains clear definitions for the reader.
- How well the proposal grasps the objective and lays out a plan to accomplish the activities outlined in your scope.
- Innovation, creativity, and design of the plan to reach the intended audience and incentivize them to respond.

Please note that while the review panels are confidential, once a contract is awarded and executed for this work, the process and all related documents including proposals are subject to FOIA. Please do not put any proprietary information that is unique to your data collection or business model in your narrative that cannot be made public at the end of this process.

Timeline

Planning for this project can begin as soon as possible upon execution of a contract by the State of Connecticut. Project activities should begin no later than June 1, 2022.

Budget

\$25,000 is the total budget for the project. Funding will be allocated by the DOAG at its discretion across its funding priorities and based on submissions received.

No cost overages or additional components to this survey will be allowed under the award. Please note, this is not a lowest proposal opportunity, but a best fit for needs of the State. Price and efficiency are important components and winning proposals will exhibit these as well as a high-quality, comprehensive approach as determined by the review panel.

Project Timeline

Start no later than June 1, 2022

Data analysis and Final Report due December 1, 2022

Final Invoice due December 15, 2022

Eligible Entities

Private businesses such as Research Consultants, as well as Nonprofits, and Universities

Please submit a proposal to Cyrena.Thibodeau@ct.gov by Monday, April 18, 2022 at 4:00 PM.

No late submissions will be accepted.

DOAG was awarded a USDA Farm to School Grant in late 2021 to fund this survey.